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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/669,173	09/23/2003	Alexander I. Kalina	02019/06UTL	1696
23873	7590	07/17/2006	EXAMINER	
ROBERT W STROZIER, P.L.L.C			LAWRENCE JR, FRANK M	
PO BOX 429			ART UNIT	
BELLAIRE, TX 77402-0429			PAPER NUMBER	
			1724	

DATE MAILED: 07/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement filed May 12, 2004 has only been partially considered because copies of the Japanese and non-patent literature have not been supplied to the office. The supplied CD-ROM only includes US Patents.

Double Patenting

2. Claims 10-16 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 2-8. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k). It appears that claims 10-16 may be amended to depend from claim 9 instead of claim 1 to overcome this objection.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 17-24 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim must refer to other claims in the alternative only (by stating “any one of claims 1-16”). See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claims have not been further treated on the merits. Claims 18-20 and 22-24 are objected to for depending from objected claims 17 and 21. Note that if claims 17 and 21 are correctly amended, claims 22-24 would be rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph because each of claims 22-24 recites both “a third mixed stream” and “a third heat exchanger,” but is unclear whether the phrases refer to the third mixed stream and the third heat exchanger recited in claim 21.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1, 2, 8-10 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Politte et al. (4,183,225).

6. Politte et al. '225 teaches a system for treating a mixed refrigerant, comprising condensing the mixture in heat exchangers (4,6), splitting the mixture at two points downstream of the first heat exchanger (4), mixing the split streams at several points, and scrubbing the mixture in a phase separator (13) (see figures, col. 1, lines 14-18, col. 2, lines 7-21).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 3-7 and 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Politte et al. '225.

9. Politte et al. '225 disclose all of the limitations of the claims except that there are 2, 3 or 4 heat exchangers and that there are two scrubbers. It would have been obvious to provide additional scrubbing or heat exchange stages to achieve more complete or efficient condensing based on the physical properties of the raw fluid stream entering the system and the desired level

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of condensation. It is submitted that the multiplying of a structure to achieve an improvement in its desired effect is an obvious modification, see *St. Regis Paper Company v. Bemis Company, Inc.*, 193 USPQ 8, 10.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The additional references listed on the attached PTO-892 form disclose scrubbing and heat exchange systems.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frank M. Lawrence whose telephone number is 571-272-1161. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on 571-272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Frank M. Lawrence

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Primary Examiner
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Frank Lawrence

7-5-06